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Spring has taken hold, and it is time to start seriously planning your next genealogical research trip or trips. Many researchers spend the winter months “trapped” in their offices sorting through piles of last summer’s “great finds.” As the weather warms, I encourage you to hit the road to pursue the next piece to your genealogical puzzle. Don’t forget the Library of Michigan in your plans.

Here are a few tips to consider when visiting libraries or archives that you have not used in the past. Come prepared. Do some homework before you visit the library. Know exactly what you’re looking for. Make a list of questions and outline a search strategy. Having a plan in place will make your trip much more rewarding.

Call ahead. Call and confirm the library’s hours of operation and determine if they actually have records you would like to search. There is nothing worse than driving several hours to do research and discovering that the library is closed.

Check the library’s Web page. Almost all library catalogs are available to search through the Internet. Searching the catalog at home allows you to prepare a list of titles you would like to examine. The Web page also will contain useful information on hours, collections, driving directions, special features, etc.

Stay focused. When visiting new libraries, it is often tempting to spend research time browsing the shelves or chatting with staff and fellow researchers. Don’t waste valuable research time talking about your “great finds” or horror stories. Keep your attention on the goals that you have set up for that particular day.

Give yourself plenty of time. Don’t expect miracles when visiting a library or archives for the first time. Even the smallest collections can be challenging to navigate. Take the first part of your visit to become familiar with the layout of the collection, the catalog and any unique indexes or finding aids that are available. If time permits, and the holdings look promising, plan on finding a local hotel and spend the night. Knowing that you will have the option to come back for a second day of research may help to remove any stress associated with your visit.

Contact the local genealogical and historical societies. The members of these societies already have a pretty good idea what you will find in the library you will be visiting. They can let you know the location of neighboring libraries, cemeteries or churches that may provide additional information.

Have fun. Remember genealogy is a hobby and it is supposed to be fun. Don’t put too much emphasis on how many ancestors you find in a single day. Genealogy is a marathon, not a sprint. Sometimes what you don’t find is as important as what you do...

Budgets have been tight, and at the Library of Michigan we have had to make some changes in our hours of operation in the last few months. Researchers should not see these changes as an effort to de-emphasize the Abrams Foundation Historical Collection of family history materials. We continue to purchase new items for the collection and keep the genealogy desk open every hour the library is open. Family and local history is, and will continue to be, a priority of the Library of Michigan. Take a look at your calendar and plan a trip to the Library of Michigan. Take advantage of a statewide resource.

Good luck with your research.

Randy Riley
Special Collections Manager
Library of Michigan

Change in Library of Michigan Hours

Due to budget restraints, as of April 2, the Library of Michigan is no longer open on Sundays. Museum and Archives of Michigan hours have not changed. The library's new hours of operation will be:

Monday and Thursday – 1 to 6 p.m.

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday – 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Saturday – 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Your continued support of our collections and services is greatly appreciated.

New Name for Archives

The State Archives of Michigan has renamed itself the Archives of Michigan to better reflect its core mission and to better align itself with the Library of Michigan. An official announcement will be made in June 2006.

Our new hours begin June 12. They will be as follows:

Monday and Thursday–9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday–1 to 5 p.m.

April Seminar a Success

On April 1, the Library of Michigan hosted a free genealogy seminar dedicated to online research. We were thrilled with the large turnout – more than 200 people attended, including a number of new faces.

Program topics were HeritageQuest, Ancestry Library Edition, Online Research at the Archives of Michigan, Vital Records Research on the Internet, New England Historic Genealogical Society Databases, Michigan Genealogy Research on the Internet, and New York Passenger Arrivals.



Given the success of the seminar, we will look at offering a similar event in the future. We hope everyone was able to learn something and apply it to his/her own family history research. Thank you to everyone who attended!

Upcoming Library Programs

Explore Your Roots, Discover Your History: 2006 Abrams Genealogy Seminar
Friday, July 21 – Saturday, July 22

The Library of Michigan is pleased to announce the 2006 Abrams Genealogy Seminar, “Explore Your Roots, Discover Your History,” to be held at the Michigan Library and Historical Center on Friday and Saturday, July 21-22.

This event offers a unique opportunity for researchers to spend two days at the library and learn about specific topics of interest, including vital records, Irish research, female ancestors, ships' passenger lists, and beginning your genealogy research. A highlight of the seminar will be a special keynote address by Curt Witcher, manager of the Historical Genealogy Department at the Allen County Public Library.

*Mark your
calendars!*

One exciting feature of the seminar is a library and archives research track, in which facilities with extensive genealogical and historical holdings will outline their collections. Participating libraries and archives include: the Library of Michigan, the Archives of Michigan, Allen County Public Library, the Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan, the Burton Historical Collection at the Detroit Public Library, and the Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Center at the Grand Rapids Public Library. This seminar track will provide researchers insight into the wealth of genealogical resources available in libraries and archives across our region.

In addition to programs that focus on resources available at the Library of Michigan, the Abrams seminar will also offer a "Your Best Find" program, where attendees will be encouraged to share their "Eureka!" moments of success. Tours of the Library of Michigan and the Archives of Michigan will also be available.

Registration for this two-day event is an affordable \$35, which includes lunch on Saturday and a conference syllabus. The seminar schedule will be available soon; stay tuned for more details. For additional information and a registration form, please see http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-17449_18635-78724_00.html or contact Randy Riley or Kris Rzepczynski at (517) 373-1300, TTY at (517) 373-1592 or the Michigan Relay Center at (800) 649-3777. We hope to see everyone here for a fantastic seminar in July!

Unique Collection Illustrating Michigan's "Family History" Goes on Exhibit at Michigan Historical Museum

Michigan's Family Album Opens Aug. 5

Dave Tinder has spent much of his life collecting photographs. When asked about the thousands of images he owns, the Metro Detroit resident gives a straightforward answer.

"One word comes to mind," he says. "Michigan."

Together, the photographs — most dating from the 1860s to the 1920s — resemble a family photo album of Michigan life. As with many family albums, this collection includes a kaleidoscope of faces, some whose names will never be forgotten, others whose identity is lost to history. They include public figures like Michigan Territorial Governor Lewis Cass and U.S. Senator Zachariah Chandler, as well as anonymous businessmen, workers, mothers and schoolchildren.

Family albums always include images of the places where a family lives, works and plays. The Tinder collection highlights Michigan's small towns, county seats and big cities as well as farms, railroad depots, factories, docks, mines and schools.

And what would a family album be without the laughter, tears and milestones that carry us from one year to the next? The Tinder collection has these, too — first communions, barn raisings, weddings and graduations.

This “photo album” is much too big to place on a coffee table, so the Michigan Historical Museum, in partnership with Dave Tinder and the University of Michigan’s Clements Library, has created a special exhibit, *Michigan’s Family Album*. The exhibit will run from Aug. 5, 2006 to Jan. 14, 2007.

For photograph aficionados, the exhibit will feature:

daguerreotypes;
tintypes;
stereo views;
cabinet cards; and
large-format photos, including panoramas

A note to postcard fans: *Michigan’s Family Album* includes a special display of postcards honoring every county in the state.

The Michigan Historical Museum is located inside the Michigan Library and Historical Center. Museum hours are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and Sunday, 1 to 5 p.m. Admission is free. For more information, visit <http://www.michigan.gov/museum> or call (517) 373-3559, TDD (517) 373-1592.

Michigan’s Family Album is sponsored, in part, by The Friends of Michigan History.

Genealogy of a House: A Practical Guide to Researching Historic Structures

Does your house have a story to tell? Would you like to learn more about its history and its former occupants? There are a variety of approaches and resources that can help tell your house’s tale.

Looking at the House - Architectural Type Sources

Particular kinds of houses were built in particular eras using particular construction techniques. Try identifying the architectural style of your house by consulting guides such as *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia and Lee McAlester (Knopf, 1984) or *Identifying American Architecture* by John J.G. Blumenson (American Association for State and Local History).

Talking to the Neighbors

People who live in the community may know a good deal about your house. They may even lead you to a person who previously lived in the house. Obviously, the more you can learn through conversation, the easier it will be to determine information about your house. You should, however, approach what you “learn” this way with a gentle skepticism. Memories fade, and the absolutely charming story you hear describing a holiday gathering in the 1960s may turn out to be about the family that lived across the street rather than the people who lived in your house.

Register of Deeds

Most record searches will start with the register of deeds, the county official charged with keeping track of who owns property. Your goal is to trace the chain of ownership, usually starting either with the most recent owner and working backward or with the first owner and working forward. To create a chain of ownership, you will need a legal description of the property rather than the street address. A legal description might read, “block 2, lot 16, Bentley’s Addition, city of Mount Pleasant.” This description can commonly be found on either the papers that were signed when the house was purchased or the semi-annual tax bill. ***

Building Department

For many newer houses, a building permit – giving the date of the house's construction and perhaps other details – may still exist. Most jurisdictions require building permits be obtained whenever a new house is erected or when major renovations are undertaken. In addition to the permit itself, there is sometimes a file of inspector's reports and occasionally the contractor's plans.

You should contact the relevant city or county building department to inquire if previously issued permits are available. There is considerable variation among jurisdictions regarding how far back records can be found. Most jurisdictions will have permits going back 20 to 30 years, while a few may have records dating back 40 to 50 years. It is very rare to find building permits prior to 1950. ***

Tax Records

For older homes (certainly any home built before 1945 and often structures erected before 1960), tax records may provide a clue as to when a building was constructed. Found in the assessor's or treasurer's office, tax records do not directly indicate when a building was constructed. However, because a building will increase the property's value, a sudden increase in the tax paid usually indicates that construction has taken place. Tax rolls, however, must be used with caution.**

Plat Books

Plat books are maps that document property ownership, published by commercial firms as a more convenient way to display ownership information than the way it was found in the Register of Deeds office. In some instances, plat books will also include dots or some other indicator of where structures existed. Urban areas are usually excluded from plat books, which concentrate on rural areas.*

A typical plat book is published by county, with a map printed for each township. Each township map is further subdivided to indicate who owns property. These plats will soon be online at <http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/micounty>. Subdivision plats show the original layout of a city, village, town or neighborhood. A link is available in the Archives of Michigan quick links page at <http://www.michigan.gov/archivesofmi> *,***

Rural Property Inventory

Rural Property Inventories were a WPA project that sought to get a handle on assessed values of land. The indirect result is a historic snapshot of properties around the state. Information includes all building types (including barns, etc.), construction date, materials, condition, electrification, plumbing, dimensions, cubic feet and woodlot, forest or crop types present on the property. **

Fire Insurance Maps

Fire insurance maps are one of the most productive sources of information about older buildings. Sometimes called "Sanborn" maps after the name of the leading company in the field, fire insurance maps first appeared in the 1870s and continued up until the 1950s. They were created for insurance companies that wanted detailed information about buildings in a particular area in order to calculate fire insurance premiums accurately. These maps show actual structural information such as exterior type, shingle type, etc. *, **

Birds-Eye View Maps

A phenomenon of the 19th century, "bird's-eye views" are available for many communities. These very accurate published sketches of a community gained their name from the artist's perspective, which was almost always that of a low-flying bird looking down on the community. Bird's-eye views were usually created at the request of a town's business community for promotional purposes. Thus the bird's-eye view creates a usually accurate snapshot of the buildings in a community as of the date of publication. Go to <http://www.memory.loc.gov/ammem> and search the database for a bird's-eye view of your town.**

County Histories

County histories were another 19th-century phenomenon. County histories solicited paid subscriptions from “leading citizens.” Depending upon the fee paid, a biographical statement, a portrait, and in some cases an image of a residence was published in the pages of the county history. It usually included only the community’s most prominent houses. Many of Michigan’s county histories are available online at:

<http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/micounty>.*

City Directories and Gazetteers

City directories list residents who live in dwellings within a community. Usually arranged by street address, they offer information regarding names, and sometimes the vocations, of those who lived in a house in years past. As with fire insurance maps, they were published mainly for urban areas and revised as market demand dictated, annually in major metropolitan areas but irregularly in smaller, more rural communities.*

The Michigan Gazetteer is a geographic, cross-indexing business directory similar to city directories. It covers the whole state and contains business name, location, proprietor and advertising.*

Other Sources

City planning offices (drawings and reports)***

“Built in America” at <http://www.memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/habs-haer>

Library of Michigan Rare Book Room (kit home plans)

Probate and civil court records**, ***

Local fire department records (incident reports)***

City council minutes (discussions of property)** , ***

Local history room of your public library or historical society***

*Library of Michigan

**Archives of Michigan

***Local offices

Portions of this article were adapted from the “Documenting the History of your House Guide” from the Central Michigan University’s Clarke Historical Library.

American Vital Records: First Steps

Vital records are the cornerstones of genealogy research. The events of birth, marriage and death function as anchors in the lives of ancestors. Determining the events of a person’s life between birth and death helps to tell the story of that person and, in part, the story of the America in which that person lived or traveled during the course of his or her lifespan. A Pennsylvania family may have scattered to North Carolina during Pontiac’s Rebellion; a young person dying in the Civil War tells a tale of that era; and a Depression-era marriage in Arizona may illuminate the life of an Illinois farm family who had relocated.

Even though these records are so important to genealogical and historical research, they can often be difficult to track down. Three different institutions take a vested interest in tracking vital records: religious organizations, governments and families. When these traditional institutions fail to collect or maintain the information, it can be difficult to recover the documents. Hints to the vital records in question can often be gleaned from at least one of these three sources. If a county courthouse in Virginia burned during the Civil War, maybe the local church survived. If there was no church in the area, perhaps a family member recorded events in a journal or Bible.

Between the colonial settlement and the 20th century, one major problem recurred over time between the East Coast and the western states. On a rolling basis, there were no governments or churches to record the information, as people were often settling in advance of those institutions. If there were territorial governments in place, they were often not obligating local authorities to track the births, deaths or marriages of area residents.

This being the case, the first step is to determine in what state or territory your ancestors lived. For example, someone living in Virginia in 1780 may have been truly located in what is now Kentucky, West Virginia, Pennsylvania or Maryland. Likewise, someone listed as living in the Indiana Territory may have been in Detroit. As these governmental units developed and solidified their boundaries, the county lines were still evolving. County-level histories and Web sites can help to determine the exact boundaries encircling the family being researched.

At times there will be no other option but to look for vital information in unexpected places. Marriage records have been found among land records. A court case may prove a person living at a given time. The will of a distant relative may provide the information needed or at least prove a relationship. Tax records may indicate the age of an individual.

To begin your background research, you might read Michigan county histories online at <http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/micounty> or those of other states at <http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrp>. For help with state and county boundaries, often the US GENWEB sites (<http://www.usgenweb.org> and <http://www.rootsweb.com/~canwgw>) have good boundary maps for some of the most problematic states and provinces. You may look for extended sources on the Library of Michigan's online catalog, ANSWER, at <http://answercat.org>.

Ranked vs. Exact Searching: What's the Difference?

Tips for Using Ancestry Library Edition

The Ancestry Library Edition homepage features a search box that, in one step, searches Ancestry's thousands of databases. Your search may return results from vital records and census entries to information about immigration and military enlistment. But take note that, while the results may match the name you searched for, that doesn't necessarily mean it's the ancestor you're seeking. Ancestry provides two options in this main search box to help you narrow or broaden your search. The tabs at the top of the search box point to ranked or exact searching.

Colors distinguish between ranked and exact searching. The ranked search screen is tan, while the exact search screen is blue. Ranked searching opens up your search to a broader range of time and place. The outcome is typically more search results, which means more information to filter through. But it also may help you find something the exact search misses because it will search for variable first name spellings, as well as middle names and initials. However, ranked searching does not give you the option to select Soundex spelling of the last name, which looks for names that sound like the one you're searching for and may account for differences in spelling or errors in indexing.

The Soundex option continues to be available in the exact search. While the exact search option searches across the same databases, the results can look much different. Exact searching is more precise – unlike ranked searching, it will only look for the time period and place you include in your search, cutting down on the number of irrelevant results.

Another way to reduce irrelevant results is to search a specific database rather than doing a general search from the Ancestry Library Edition homepage. To choose a specific database, follow a link to a specific census year or type of record from the Ancestry homepage. You may see a full list of databases from the bottom of the screen, where there are links to “list recent or all databases.”

Selecting a specific database allows you to customize your search. A military records database will offer advanced search options such as enlistment date, while a death records database will offer search fields such as death year and place. Additionally, exploring individual databases gives you a chance to read the description on the main search page of a particular database. Here you will find information such as the places and dates included, what type of information will be included in the results and the source of the information.

Whether you're searching across the Ancestry databases or using an individual database, you always have the option of using wildcards, which are symbols that represent unknown letters. Ancestry uses the following wildcards:

An asterisk (*) stands in for zero to six letters. You must include at least the first three letters of a name. For example, a search for mor* may find morgan, mort, morton.

A question mark (?) stands in for a single character. For example, br?wn may return brown or brawn.

Michigan Naturalization Records

Naturalization is the voluntary process by which an alien becomes an American citizen. Records of this process can provide a researcher with information such as a person's birth date and location, occupation, immigration year, marital status and spouse information, witnesses' names and addresses, and more.

From 1790 through much of the 20th century, an alien could become naturalized in any court of record. Thus, most people in Michigan went to the court most convenient to them, usually a county court. Aliens who lived in or near large cities, such as Detroit or Grand Rapids, sometimes became naturalized in a federal court.



As a general rule, naturalization was a two-step process that took a minimum of five years. After residing in the United States for two years, an alien could file a declaration of intention (first papers) to become a citizen (beginning in 1941, this step was no longer required). After three additional years – but, after 1906, no more than seven years later – the alien could file a petition for naturalization. After the petition was granted, a certificate of citizenship was issued to the alien (this sometimes has been referred to as a third step). These two steps did not have to take place in the same court.

There were major exceptions to this rule. One was that “derivative” citizenship was granted to wives and minor children of naturalized men. From 1790 to 1922, wives of naturalized men automatically became citizens. This also meant that an alien woman who married a U.S. citizen automatically became a citizen. Conversely, an American woman who married an alien lost her U.S. citizenship, even if she never left the

United States. From 1790 to 1940, children under the age of 21 automatically became naturalized citizens upon the naturalization of their father, or if their father was in the process of becoming a citizen when he died. Unfortunately, however, names and biographical information about wives and children are rarely included in declarations or petitions filed before September 1906, when the federal government standardized the process to make it more uniform and less chaotic.

Another exception to the general rule was that, from 1824 to 1906, minor aliens who had lived in the United States five years before their 23rd birthday could file both their declarations and petitions at the same time. A third major exception was the special consideration that was often given to veterans between 1862 and 1952 to skip all or part of this process.

It is impossible to provide hard-and-fast rules about the content or even the existence of naturalization records. The methods of making and keeping these records in both the federal and state courts vary as much as the procedures in such cases. Thus the declaration of intention in Michigan consists merely of the bare statement of intention and the name and allegiance of the alien. Naturalization records in Michigan may contain full histories of the aliens, but a majority of the records show only the name, nationality, oath of allegiance, and date of admission.

Naturalization records for 27 counties may still be with the county clerk's office. However, records for 57 of Michigan's 83 counties are now kept in the Archives of Michigan. Twenty-eight of the Archives' records have been indexed online at http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-17449_18635_20684---,00.html. A microfilm index to the federal naturalization records for southeast Michigan can be found in the Library of Michigan's Abrams Foundation Local History Collection.

Finding aids for naturalization records:

The National Archives Web site is a great place to begin your search with indexes online for some states and a listing of Regional Archives holdings. <http://www.archives.gov/genealogy/naturalization/>

The Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services handles naturalization records from 1906 to the present. <http://uscis.gov/graphics/aboutus/history/index.htm>

Index (Soundex) to Naturalization Petitions, 1792-1906 (293 rolls). This serves as a finding aid for New York City naturalization petitions. **Microfilm F 118 .I642 2000z**

Index to Naturalization Petitions of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York, 1865-1957 (142 rolls). Another finding aid for the New York area, covering Brooklyn and Long Island. **Microfilm F 188 .I64 2000z**

Index to New England Naturalization Petitions, 1791-1906 (117 rolls). This serves a similar function for naturalizations occurring in various courts in the six New England states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. **Microfilm F 4 .I53 1983**

Index cards to Naturalization Petitions for...Detroit, 1907-1995. This covers the federal court for southeastern Michigan. **Microfilm F 566 .V2 2004**

An index to Michigan naturalization records at the Archives of Michigan can be found at http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-17449_18635_20684---,00.html.

Newman, John J. *American Naturalization Records, 1790-1990: What They are and How to Use Them*. Bountiful, UT: Heritage Quest, 1998. **Genealogy KF 4710 .N39 1998**

Schaefer, Christine. *Guide to Naturalization Records of the United States* Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1997. **Genealogy CS 49 .S28 1997**

Szucs, Loretto Dennis. *They Became Americans: Finding Naturalization Records and Ethnic Origins*. Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry, 1998. **Genealogy CS 47 .S96 1998**

Griffith's Valuation, an Ireland Resource

If your ancestors were in Ireland in the mid-19th century, then you should know about an essential resource, Sir Richard Griffith's *General Valuation of Rateable Property in Ireland*. Irish census records prior to 1901 were lost in the destruction of the Irish Public Records Office in 1922, leaving Griffith's valuation as the nearest thing to a head-of-household census for this time period. An excellent source for locating your ancestors, the valuation is available on microfiche in the Abrams Collection at the Library of Michigan.

Carried out between 1847 and 1864, Griffith's valuation was the first systematic valuation of property holdings in Ireland. Its main purpose was to determine the amount of tax each tenant should pay toward the support of the poor. But it was much more than that. It involved surveying all the land of Ireland, recording who lived where (with head-of-household name), who owned the property, a description of the property including what buildings were on the land, and the size and value of the property. Detailed maps, called ordnance maps, were also created for the survey.

If you are going to delve into this resource, it is helpful to know that it is referred to by many names. The official name is *General Valuation of Rateable Property in Ireland, 1848-1864*. Because Sir Richard Griffith, the commissioner of valuation, oversaw this enormous task, it is commonly known simply as "Griffith's Valuation" or "Griffith's Primary Valuation" or some other variation of these names.

Griffith's valuation covers all of Ireland's 32 counties and the cities of Dublin and Belfast. It is organized geographically by county, barony, civil parish, and townland. (For Dublin and Belfast, it is organized by ward and street.) Since the valuation and all indexes to it are by county, you must know the county from which your ancestor originated to begin your search. If you know the place name, but not the county name, consult Samuel Lewis' *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* in the Library of Michigan's genealogy collection (Genealogy DA 979 .L48 1984, vols.1 & 2).

There are different types of indexes to Griffith's valuation available, depending on what county your ancestors hailed from. The best known is the Index of Surnames, also called the Householders Index. The Library of Michigan has this entire index set on microfiche, covering all counties of Ireland. The Householders Index is not a typical index. It is a county-by-county series that records the occurrence of households with a particular surname in the various civil parishes of a county. Researchers can use this index to determine the possible location of an ancestor, but they must check all of the entries for that surname in a particular county to determine if it is the name they are looking for. Searches will be easier for less common names. The Householders Index can be very useful, but researchers should be prepared for a multi-step process that will take some time.

For Mayo and Wicklow counties, there are full-name indexes, which are easier to use because they eliminate a few steps as compared using the Householders Index. These are also available on microfiche at the Library of Michigan, titled *Full Name Index to Householders for Griffith's Primary Valuation*, by Andrew J. Morris.

Whichever index you use, it will lead you to the actual valuation records you are seeking. All of this microfiche (the indexes as well as the valuation itself) is located together in one drawer of the microfiche cabinet in the Abrams collection. The cards are filed under call numbers ranging from HD 630 .B45 G75 1855a to HD 630 .W53 M67 1989a.

Finally, for each individual listed in Griffith's valuation, there is a code that refers to the ordinance map for the area. The ordinance maps are the most detailed set of maps of any European country in the 19th century, with a scale of six inches to the mile. While these maps are not part of the Library of Michigan collection, they are available on microfilm at some libraries in the U.S., including the Newberry Library in Chicago and the Library of Congress. The maps also can be viewed online at <http://irishhistoricmaps.ie/historic/>.

Additional Resources:

General Valuation of Rateable Property in Ireland.
Genealogy Microfiche HD 630 .C695 1862a

Ireland: The Householder's Index, the Griffith's Valuation by Betty Pfeiffer, 1988.
Genealogy CS 483 .P5 1988

Very detailed step-by-step instructions on how to use the Householders Index to Griffith's.
Consult this first if you are about to use the Householders Index.

Richard Griffith and his Valuations of Ireland by James R. Reilly, 2000.
Genealogy DA 950.23 .G75 R45 2000

Interesting background information about the whole valuation project undertaken by Sir Griffith, providing information that could help you get the most out of your research.

Thank You, Uncle Sam! Federal Government a Rich Source of Research Materials

Those of us who research our family histories sometimes wonder, "Where do the materials come from?" You may be surprised to hear that many of the records come from the U.S. government.

The federal government has documents dating back to the Declaration of Independence. The agency that oversees the archiving of historical documents has changed its name a number of times through its history, but its purpose has always been the same: to keep and preserve valuable records that will be used for historical and genealogical research. The National Archives was created in 1934 and became the National Archives and Records Administration in 1984.

Prior to the construction of the National Archives Building, the records were kept by the different bureaus, agencies or offices that had collected the information. The departments were not always able to store the records properly, which often caused serious damage to them. As a result, there were some major fires in facilities housing documents, such as the one in the Department of Commerce facility in Washington, D.C. that almost destroyed the entire 1890 federal decennial census. Congress finally appropriated money for a building to house the National Archives in 1926, and it was completed in the mid-1930s.

Since the National Archives was established, bringing all of the government's records together, it has been making these available by microfilming and now digitizing records for access electronically. Whenever you use the censuses, passenger arrival lists, military records, pension records, immigration and naturalization records, land records, passport applications, and court records, give thanks to Uncle Sam for making this possible.

Check Out This Helpful Guide to Online Genealogy Research

Plugging into Your Past: How to Find Real Family History Records Online by Rick Crume (Betterway Books, 2004) is a great resource for genealogy research on the Internet. It provides search strategies and recommended Web sites, including Michigan's own GENDIS: Michigan Genealogical Death Indexing System (<http://www.mdch.state.mi.us/pha/osr/gendisx/search2.htm>). Crume includes a state-by-state list of online resources for each record type, such as vital records, census, and wills and probate information. While some of the listed resources are part of subscription databases like Ancestry Library Edition, many are free Web sites created by state or local governments or genealogical societies. This book is shelved in the Library of Michigan's genealogy section, with the call number CS 49 .C78 2004.

Publisher's Note:

The Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries (HAL) electronically publishes *Michigan Genealogist* on a quarterly basis. It is intended to provide family history-related information to interested researchers and to inform readers about resources found in the Library of Michigan, Archives of Michigan and other HAL departments.

We encourage wide distribution of this newsletter and invite readers to share it with their friends, families and fellow researchers. We have made every effort to provide accurate information. However, the publisher does not assume any liability to any party for any loss or damage caused by errors or omissions related to any of the issues of *Michigan Genealogist*.

If you would like to be added to our list of e-mail subscribers, please contact HAL at librarian@michigan.gov.

Driving Directions and Parking:

Information concerning driving directions and parking can be located at the following Web sites.

Driving Directions: <http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160—55205,00.html>

Parking: http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-17445_19274_20001—,00.html

Research:

Due to the length of time needed to conduct genealogical research, the staff of the Library of Michigan and Archives of Michigan is unable provide extensive research services. Check the Library of Michigan and Archives of Michigan Web pages at <http://www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan> and <http://www.michigan.gov/archivesofmi> for more information on policies and procedures regarding genealogical research.

Ask A Librarian:

Genealogy queries can be sent to the Library of Michigan at librarian@michigan.gov. While staff members cannot do extensive research, they can point you in the right direction and assist you in determining if the library's collection contains the information you seek. If necessary, the library's staff will refer you to a researcher or local genealogical society that will conduct research for a fee. Questions relating to the Archives of Michigan should be sent to archives@michigan.gov.